

Appendix D

Determination of Qualifications

DETERMINATION OF QUALIFICATIONS PROCESS

Introduction

The Human Resources Specialist will review qualifications for incumbents identified in the *Unit Position Identification Worksheet* (in Appendix C) submitted by Fire Managers against the requirements in the *IFPM Standard*.

Auditing Incumbents

For employees in technical positions who will be reassigned to the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist positions affected by the *IFPM Standard*:

Step 1: The Fire Manager and the incumbent will complete and sign the *Incumbent 0401 Declaration* and submit it to the Human Resources Office, along with required supporting documentation (as described in Position Identification, Step 2 in the IFPM Implementation Plan).

Step 2: The Human Resources Specialist will review the information provided in the *Incumbent 0401 Declaration* to make a determination of qualification.

Note: If additional assistance is needed in this process, please review the *Procedures for Implementing the 0401 Supplemental Qualification* found in this Appendix.

Step 3: Notification of Qualifications Status

Refer to the IFPM Implementation Plan, Step 4.

For employees currently in professional Fire Management Specialist positions affected by the *IFPM Standard*:

Step 1: The Fire Manager and the incumbent will complete and sign the *Incumbent 0401 Declaration*, and submit it to the Human Resources Office, along with required supporting documentation (as described in Position Identification, Step 2 in the IFPM Implementation Plan).

Step 2: The Human Resources Specialist will review the information provided in the *Incumbent 0401 Declaration* to make a determination of qualification.

Note: If additional assistance is needed in this process, please review the *Procedures for Implementing the 0401 Supplemental Qualification* found in this Appendix.

Step 3: Notification of Qualifications Status

Refer to the IFPM Implementation Plan, Step 4.

For employees in technical positions affected by the *IFPM Standard*:

Step 1: The Fire Manager and the incumbent will complete and sign the *Incumbent GS-0455/GS-0462 Declaration*, and submit it to the Human Resources Office, along with required supporting documentation (as described in Position Identification, Step 2 in the IFPM Implementation Plan).

Step 2: The Human Resources Specialist will review the information provided in the *Incumbent GS-0455/GS-0462 Declaration* to make a determination of qualification.

Step 3: Notification of Qualifications Status

Refer to the IFPM Implementation Plan, Step 4.

Employee selected as a technician for a position advertised concurrently as professional and technical

Step 1: After the selection has been made, the Human Resources Specialist will send an Offer Letter and *Conditions of Employment* document to the selectee (refer to *Recruitment and Staffing for IFPM Positions* in the IFPM Implementation Plan.)

Step 2: The Human Resources Specialist will review the employee's application along with additional documentation that was attached with the application (i.e., college transcripts, IQCS Individual Master Report, and/or copies of certificates or letters of training completion). Use the *HR Qualification Checklist/Worksheet* in this Appendix to make a determination of qualification.

If additional assistance is needed in this process, please review the *Procedures for Implementing Supplemental Qualification Standard for GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist* in this Appendix.

Step 3: Notification of Qualifications Status

Refer to the IFPM Implementation Plan, Step 4.

Employee Self-Assessment

For employees who wish to gauge their qualifications for the GS-0401 Fire Management Specialist, a self-assessment tool is available online at www.nifc.gov/training_qual/IFPM/ifpm.htm. Employees should be advised that the final qualification determinations will be made by the Human Resources Office, once the employee has applied for a specific vacancy.

HR QUALIFICATION CHECKLIST/WORKSHEET

FOR

GS-0401 FIRE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

Vacancy Announcement: _____

Official Title/Series/Grade: _____

Org. Title: _____

Employee's Name: _____

SELECTIVE FACTORS

Refer to the Interagency Fire Program Management Qualifications Standards and Guide for the selective factors required based on position to be filled. An applicant who does not meet the selective factor(s) is not considered qualified. The selective factor(s) are the NWCG Incident Management Qualifications and additional required training found as the last item in the Minimum Qualifications Standards for each key fire management position.

Meets Selective Factor: Yes _____ No _____

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE:

A. Degree: biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, or related disciplines appropriate to the position. **OR**

B. Combination of education and experience – courses equivalent to a major in biological sciences, agriculture or natural resources management, or at least 24 semester hours in biological sciences, natural resources¹, wildland fire management², forestry, or agriculture equivalent to a major field of study, plus appropriate experience or additional education that is comparable to that normally acquired through the successful completion of a full 4-year course of study in the biological sciences, agriculture, or natural resources. **AND**

One year of specialized, directly related experience equivalent to the GS-____ grade level.

¹ Natural Resources, for these purposes is defined as work in the conservation, management, protection, or utilization of resources in the life sciences arena.

² Courses equivalent to a major in wildland fire management must include adequate scientific content to provide the basis for a professional-level degree. Courses offered as part of an Associate Degree, or Vocational Certificate will not meet the requirements for upper division course work. Courses offered as part of an Applied Science Degree, will have to be assessed to determine if they meet the OPM Supplemental Standards.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS

Creditable College Education: 24 semester/36 quarter hours of course credit must be obtained in the following academic categories. Of the 24 semester/36 quarter hours, 18 semester/24 quarter hours must be upper division courses (typically number 300 or 400 or prefaced with a C or D).

<u>Academic Category</u>	<u>Total Hours</u>	<u>Upper Division Hours</u>
Biological Sciences	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs
Natural Resources	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs
Wildland Fire Management	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs
Forestry	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs	____ Sem ____ Qtr Hrs

Agriculture
Totals:

___ Sem ___ Qtr Hrs
___ Sem/Qtr Hrs

___ Sem ___ Qtr Hrs
___ Sem/Qtr Hrs

CREDITABLE COLLEGE COURSEWORK: _____

Other Education Creditable toward the 24 Semester Hour Requirement:

Technical Fire Management (TFM) – Upper Division – 18 Semester Hours

(All Modules must be successfully completed before any of the 18 semester hours are credited.)

Module I/Ia Statistics/Computers and Math
Module II Economics
Module III Fuels Management
Module IV Fire Ecology and Fire Effects
Module V Fire and Land Management
Module VI Final Project Reviews

CREDITABLE TFM COURSEWORK (All modules completed): _____

NWCG Courses – Upper Division Completed:

FIEM	Fire In Ecosystem Mgmt	1 Sem Hr	_____
FML	Fire Mgmt Leadership	1 Sem Hr	_____
FPM	Fire Program Mgmt	1 Sem Hr	_____
LFML	Local Fire Mgmt Ldrshp	1 Sem Hr	_____
NFMAS	Natl Fire Mgmt Analy Sys	1 Sem Hr	_____
RX-410 or 450	Smoke Mgmt Techniques	1 Sem Hr	_____
RX-510 or 540	Applied Fire Effects	1 Sem Hr	_____
RX-590	Presc Fire Behav Interpret	2 Sem Hr	_____
	(To be combined with S-590)		
S-490	Adv Wl Fire Behav Calcul	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-491	Natl Fire Danger Rating Sys	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-492	Long Term Fire Risk Assessmt	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-493	Fire Area Growth Simulation	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-520	Adv Incident Mgmt	2 Sem Hrs	_____
S-580	Adv Fire Use Applications	1 Sem Hr	_____
	(Natl Parks and Wilderness Fire Mgmt)		
S-590	Fire Behavior Interpretation	2 Sem Hrs	_____
S-620	Area Command	1 Sem Hr	_____

CREDITABLE NWCG UPPER DIVISION COURSES: _____

NWCG Courses – Lower Division Completed:

P-151	Wildfire Origin & Cause Determ	1 Sem Hr	_____
Rx-300	Presc Fire For Burn Bosses	1 Sem Hr	_____
Rx-310 or 340	Intro To Fire Effects	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-190/290	Intro To Fire Behavior Combined		
	With Intermed Wl Fire Behavior	1 Sem Hr	_____
S-390	Intro To Wl Fire Behav Calcul	1 Sem Hr	_____

CREDITABLE NWCG LOWER DIVISION COURSES: _____

SPECIALIZED EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS

GS-07: Must meet the following:

Experience that demonstrated an understanding of fire behavior relative to fuels, weather and topography and how fire affects natural and cultural resources. Typical assignments included:

- _____ Participating in implementing prescribed fire or fire use plans to ensure resource objectives can be met from a fire management standpoint.
- _____ Developing initial attack incident management strategies and tactics to meet the stated resource objectives.

GS-09: Experience in at least two of the following three categories:

- _____ 1. Experience that demonstrated understanding of fire effects on cultural and natural resources. Assignments must have shown participation in activities such as:
 - Developing fire management plans to ensure resource objectives can be met from a fire management standpoint.
 - Conducting field inspections before and/or after prescribed fires or wildland fires to determine if defined resource objectives have been met.
- _____ 2. Prescribed Fire/Fuels Management – experience in activities such as:
 - Professional forest or range inventory methods and procedures (e.g., Brown’s planar intercept for dead down fuels; live fuel loading assessments), or
 - Analysis of fuel loadings and determination of appropriate fuel treatment methods and programming, or
 - Evaluating prescribed fire plans or fire management plans to ensure fire containment is possible and identify appropriate suppression contingencies if containment is not obtained.
- _____ 3. Fire management operations – analyzing and applying fire management strategies, and experience in at least four of the following activities:
 - _____ Mobilization and Dispatch Coordination
 - _____ Fire Prevention
 - _____ Training
 - _____ Logistics
 - _____ Equipment Development and Deployment
 - _____ Fire Communications Systems
 - _____ Suppression and Preparedness

GS-11 and above: Experience must have included all of the fire program management elements as described below:

- _____ Reviewing and evaluating fire mgmt plans for ecological soundness and technical adequacy;
- _____ Conducting field inspections before and after prescribed or wildland fires to determine if resource objectives were achieved and/or to evaluate the effectiveness of actions taken; and
- _____ Developing analyses on the ecological role of fire and its use and/or exclusion, and smoke management.

In addition, appropriate experience must have included either Prescribed Fire/Fuels Management – or – Fire Management Operations as described below:

- _____ Prescribed Fire/Fuels Management – experience in a broad range of activities such as:
- Professional forest or range inventory methods and procedures (e.g., Brown’s planar intercept for dead down fuels; live fuel loading assessments);
 - Analysis of fuel loadings and determination of appropriate fuel treatment methods and programming;
 - Land use planning and environmental coordination;
 - Evaluating prescribed fire plans or fire mgmt plans to ensure fire containment is possible and identify appropriate suppression contingencies if containment is not obtained.
- _____ Fire Management Operations – analyzing and applying fire management strategies, and experience in at least five of the following activities:
- _____ Mobilization and Dispatch Coordination
- _____ Fire Prevention and Education
- _____ Training
- _____ Logistics
- _____ Equipment Development and Deployment
- _____ Fire Communication Systems
- _____ Suppression and Preparedness
- _____ Aviation

Meets basic education requirements: Yes No

Meets specialized experience requirements: Yes No

Qualified Yes No

Signature of Human Resources Specialist determining qualifications

Date

Contact Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

HUMAN RESOURCES SPECIALIST: Provide a copy of this worksheet to the applicant as a record of the rationale for your determination.

APPLICANT: Provide a copy of this document when applying to future announcements for the same position as identified on the first page. Questions should be directed to the specialist whose signature appears above.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTING SUPPLEMENTAL QUALIFICATION STANDARD FOR GS-0401 FIRE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

The Supplemental Qualification Standard has been approved and released for immediate use by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for DOI and USDA. The goal of the Standard is to ensure consistent application in qualifying and hiring employees for key fire management specialist positions in these agencies. The Qualification Standard can be found on the Internet at http://www.nifc.gov/training_qual/IFPM/ifpm.htm. This Qualification Standard is to be used in conjunction with the requirements outlined under the *Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Professional and Scientific Positions* in the *Qualification Standards for General Schedule Positions Operating Manual* published by the Office of Personnel Management.

Selective Factors

Beginning October 1, 2009, applicants/incumbents will be required to have held all of the qualifications listed for their position. Selective factors to be used for these positions are the NWCG Incident Management Qualifications and Additional Required Training listed in the Supplemental Standard. These abilities/certifications are required in order to successfully perform the duties of the position and cannot be learned or obtained in a reasonable period of time after occupying the position. A reasonable period of time is defined as 60-90 days.

During the implementation period (October 1, 2004 – September 30, 2009) applicants being considered for positions and incumbents of positions that require NWCG Incident Management Qualifications, but not currency, must have had at least two of the three qualifications listed. In cases where only one or two qualifications are listed, the applicant must have held all the qualifications at one time in their career.

Applicants being considered for, and incumbents of, positions with ICS certifications that require currency must have all certifications listed.

Review of Basic Requirements

In order to apply the degree requirements, Human Resources must review both college transcripts and the course work provided under **Other Education Creditable Toward 24 Semester Hours Requirement** in Attachment 3 of the Supplemental Qualification Standard.

GS-5: The above will be used in determining qualifications of an applicant at the GS-5 level, however, an applicant who meets the requirements for Superior Academic Achievement will qualify at the GS-7 level.

GS-7: Except for Superior Academic Achievement, an applicant at the GS-7 level must meet the requirements listed on page 2 of the Standard.

GS-9: To qualify at the GS-9 level, an applicant must show one year of specialized experience at the GS-7 level and meet two of the three categories listed on page 2 of the Standard. To be creditable the experience must relate very closely to each one of the items listed. In no case will the experience be credited unless it is related to fire operations and/or management. At the same time, if the experience is directly related and the applicant or incumbent is in the GS-0462, GS-0455, or the GS-0401, the applicant must receive credit for that specialized experience.

Education may be substituted for specialized experience as outlined in the *Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Scientific and Professional Series*, e.g., a master's degree in a related field, as long as the selective factors are met.

GS-11: To qualify at the GS-11 level and above, an applicant must show one year of experience equivalent to the next lower level and meet all of the requirements listed for the GS-11 level and above. Education may be substituted for specialized experience as outlined in the *Group Coverage Qualification Standard for Scientific and Professional Series*, e.g., a doctoral degree in a related field, as long as the selective factors are met.

Physical Requirements

Along with meeting the minimum qualifications, an applicant/employee must also meet the medical/physical requirement for the position.

Crediting Education Equivalent to a Major Field of Study (24 Semester Hours)

The 24 semester hours must be obtained in **any combination** of the following: biological sciences, natural resources¹, wildland fire management², forestry, or agriculture. A minimum of 18 semester hours must be in upper level course work. Upper level courses are normally numbered 300 or 400, or begin with a C or D. **At no time will upper level courses be considered creditable if they do not relate directly to the course work listed above.** If you have questions on crediting course work, contact your IFPM Agency/Bureau Human Resources Representative.

Specialized Experience

There may be a tendency to not credit as specialized experience work that an employee performed in a one-grade (technician) interval position. If the experience performed as a technician demonstrates the Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities required to perform the work of a position in the Scientific and Professional series, it would be credited as such. Refer to *OPM Qualifications Standards for General Schedule Positions, General Policies and Instructions, Part E.3.(e)*.

Other Education Creditable Toward 24 Semester Hour Requirement

Follow closely the instructions provided in the Supplemental Qualification Standard.

Applicants can also meet the minimum educational requirements by successfully completing the identified NWCG courses or the TFM course.

¹ Natural Resources, for these purposes, is defined as work in the conservation, management, protection, or utilization of resources in the life sciences arena.

² Courses equivalent to a major in wildland fire management must include adequate scientific content to provide the basis for a professional-level degree. Courses offered as part of an Associate Degree or Vocational Certificate will not meet the requirements for upper division course work. Courses offered as part of an Applied Science Degree will have to be assessed to determine if they meet the OPM Supplemental Standards.